

details in this respect are provided in connection with the discussion that accompanies FIGS.

5-18. FIGS. 5-18 show that portion of the frame 114 which is commonly referred to in the snowmobile art as a tunnel.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 60 and 61 as follows:

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60. (Four Times Amended) A snowmobile, comprising:
a frame having a forward-most drive track axle disposed thereon;
a straddle seat disposed on the frame;
an engine disposed on the frame in front of the seat;
two skis disposed on the frame; and
a steering device disposed on the frame and operatively connected to the two skis for steering the snowmobile;
wherein the snowmobile has a center of gravity without a rider and the steering device is disposed on the frame forward of the center of gravity, and wherein the forward-most axle is positioned forward of the center of gravity and rearward of a rearward-most portion of the steering device such that the center of gravity is rearward of the rearward-most portion of the steering device.

61. (Four Times Amended) A snowmobile, comprising:
a frame having a forward-most drive axle mounted thereon;

a straddle seat disposed on the frame, the seat being dimensioned to support a standard rider in a standard position in which the standard rider straddles the seat while the snowmobile is heading straight ahead on flat terrain, the standard rider having dimensions and weight of a 50-percentile human male;

an engine disposed on the frame in front of the seat;

two skis disposed on the frame; and

a steering device disposed on the frame and operatively connected to the two skis for steering the snowmobile;

wherein the snowmobile is adapted to have a center of gravity with a rider in the standard position such that the steering device and the forward-most drive axle are disposed on the frame forward of the center of gravity, and such that the forward-most drive axle is positioned rearward of a rearward-most portion of the steering device so that the center of gravity is rearward of the rearward-most portion of the steering device.

See the attached Appendix for the changes made to effect the above claims.

Please add new claims 85-92, as follows:

85. (New) A snowmobile having a center of gravity without a rider, comprising:
- a frame including a pair of footrests each defining a forward-most surface, the frame including a tunnel defining an upper-most surface;
- a straddle seat disposed on the frame;
- an engine disposed on the frame in front of the seat;
- two skis disposed on the frame; and

a forward-most drive track axle disposed on the frame forward of the pair of footrests and forward of the center of gravity,

wherein an angle between a line passing through the forward-most drive track axle and the center of gravity and a horizontal line passing through the forward-most drive track axle is less than 55° ;

wherein the center of gravity is positioned below the upper-most surface of the tunnel, and

wherein the center of gravity is positioned in substantial alignment with the forward-most surface of each of said pair of footrests.

86. (New) A snowmobile, comprising:

a frame;

a straddle seat disposed on the frame;

an engine disposed on the frame in front of the seat;

two skis disposed on the frame;

right and left sideboards extending laterally from the frame below the seat on either side thereof, each of the sideboards having a forward portion disposed at an angle Δ with horizontal that is -5° ; and

right and left toe-holds associated with the right and left sideboards to allow the rider to releasably secure himself to the snowmobile.

87. (New) A snowmobile, comprising:

a frame;

an engine disposed on the frame;

a drive track disposed below the frame and connected operatively to the engine for propulsion of the snowmobile;

two skis disposed on the frame;

a straddle seat disposed on the frame behind the engine, the seat being dimensioned to support a standard rider with a center of gravity in a standard position in which the standard rider straddles the seat while the snowmobile is heading straight ahead on flat terrain, the standard rider having dimensions and weight of a 50-percentile human male; and

a steering device disposed on the frame forward of the seat, the steering device being operatively connected to the two skis for steering the snowmobile,

wherein the snowmobile has a first center of gravity without the rider and wherein the snowmobile is adapted to have a second center of gravity with the rider in the standard position such that, in use, a distance between a vertical line passing through the first center of gravity and a vertical line passing through the second center of gravity is between 0 cm and 14 cm.

88. (New) The snowmobile of claim 40, further comprising a tunnel and an endless drive track housed within the tunnel, the endless drive track being operatively coupled to the engine.

89. (New) A snowmobile, comprising:

a frame including a tunnel having a forward-most drive track axle disposed thereon;

a straddle seat disposed on the frame above the tunnel;
an engine disposed on the frame in front of the seat;
two skis disposed on the frame; and
a steering device disposed on the frame and operatively connected to the two skis for steering the snowmobile;

wherein the snowmobile has a center of gravity without a rider, and wherein the center of gravity and the forward-most drive track axle are positioned rearward of a rearward-most portion of the steering device.

90. (New) A snowmobile, comprising:

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a frame;
a straddle seat disposed on the frame;
an engine disposed on the frame in front of the seat;
a steering device disposed on the frame and spaced forward of the seat;
two skis disposed on the frame and operatively connected to the steering device for steering the snowmobile; and

a footrest disposed below each side of the seat;
wherein, for the standard rider in the standard position, the seat defines a seat position, the steering device defines a steering position, and the footrests define a footrest position, wherein a distance between vertical lines passing through the steering position and the seat position is between 40-90 cm.

~~91. (New) The snowmobile of claim 60, wherein the frame includes a tunnel, and the forward-most drive track axle is positioned on the tunnel.~~

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92. (New) An assembly comprising:

a frame including a tunnel;

a straddle seat mounted on the frame;

an engine disposed on the frame in front of the seat;

two skis disposed on the frame;

a steering shaft operatively connected to the two skis, the steering shaft being disposed over the engine at an angle ϵ of between 25° and 40° from vertical;

wherein the tunnel supports a drive belt coupled to the engine and defines a footrest on each side of the seat that is inclined at an angle Δ with horizontal that is between 0° to -5° ;

and

wherein a forward-most axle of the drive belt is positioned rearward of the steering device.

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IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please accept the proposed drawing changes which are highlighted on the attached Request for Approval of Drawing Corrections for Figs. 2 and 3.